

Today's News - Tuesday, January 7, 2014

- An amusing take on the "Top 10 Architecture Controversies Of 2013."
- Hume sees things looking up for Toronto architecture in the new year, and has some nice things to say about the old, though "profound confusion summed up the state of a city that has forgotten where it's come from and failed to grasp where it's going."
- Campbell scores the highs - and lows - of Boston Mayor Menino's 20-year reign: "The best thing he did for architecture isn't a building or group of buildings," but the transformation of "a patchwork of semi-isolated neighborhoods into a single whole city."
- Horton's take on 2013 gives shout-outs (some hilarious) to Zaha, Rem, Sinclair & Stohr, and Kanye, but gets serious in explaining why it was Denise Scott Brown's year.
- Wainwright looks to the new year with high - and low - hopes for "singing bins, talking pavements, more High Line knock-offs - and a city shaped solely by commercial interests" and McAslan setting up a storefront shop on riot-ravaged Tottenham High Road.
- Booth explains why McAslan is turning his attention from Haiti to Tottenham "to train young people and revitalize the area in the wake of the riots."
- Golembiewski tackles "architectural determinism" and whether architecture really can "shape behavior in a predictable and positive way."
- Bose visits Rem's De Rotterdam and finds it both "impressive" and "perplexing...a larger-than-life exaggeration of the corporate podium-tower, anxious and engorged, casting a fractured reflection on the water and baring its guts" (great pix!).
- Architectural historian Vanstiphout says the De Rotterdam illustrates how the city has lost its architectural mojo: it "seems just to refer to those things that make Rotterdam the same as everywhere...There is something exhilarating, something beautiful, but also something tragic about this building."
- Saffron is more than a bit troubled by the "fuzzy" details put forth for the massive Children's Hospital of Philadelphia's research center: renderings "have mainly shown views from 30,000 feet"; even with promises of "welcoming parks" and improved riverfront access, "the public spaces depicted in the pictures look anything but inviting."
- Hawthorne sees "tentative signs of progress" in L.A.'s new transit network design template that shows "signs of a new respect for architecture" even if it's "overly restrained, even bloodless."
- Lamster x 2: he gives (mostly) thumbs-up to the University of Texas at Dallas's arts and technology building: it's "ingenious if erratic, mechanical and humane, all mixed up but with a big-hearted intelligence that compensates for its flaws. Call it the cat-in-a-pillowcase school of architecture."
- He bemoans "a depressingly familiar refrain" as another O'Neil Ford home in North Dallas faces demolition.
- Betsky steps down as director of the Cincinnati Art Museum, and will help pick his successor.
- Eyefuls of IS ARCH Awards winners.
- Call for entries: New Venue for the Dubai Global Energy Forum; open to students and young graduates.
- EDITOR'S NOTE: We mark today as the one-year anniversary of the passing of Ada Louise Huxtable, and sorely miss her...

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Top 10 Architecture Controversies Of 2013: The year started with Denise Scott Brown asking the Pritzker for recognition...and ended with Valencia, Spain, suing homeboy Santiago Calatrava for his deteriorating City of Arts and Sciences...In between, we had glass buildings melting cars, Brutalist icons falling down, and... -- Bertrand Goldberg; Julia Morgan; Frank Gehry; Feilden Clegg Bradley; Renzo Piano; Rafael Vinoly; Zaha Hadid- Architizer

A quiet year for Toronto architecture, but good times ahead: With several grand projects taking shape on the skyline and beyond, 2014 is already looking up...profound confusion summed up the state of a city that has forgotten where it's come from and failed to grasp where it's going. By Christopher Hume -- Diamond Schmitt; KPMB; Stantec; HDR; Frank Gehry; Charles Correa; Fumihiko Maki; Vladimir Djurovic; Snohetta/Zeidler Partnership; Will Alsop; ZAS Architects- Toronto Star

For urban design, Menino era scores highs and lows: The best thing he did for architecture, the change he deserves to be remembered for, isn't a building or group of buildings. It's the transformation, still in progress, of Boston from a patchwork of semi-isolated neighborhoods into a single whole city. By Robert Campbell -- William Rawn; ADD Inc.; Renzo Piano; Elkus Manfredi; Handel Architects; Leers Weinzapfel; Narrow Gate architects; Mecanoo; Sasaki Associates; CBT Architects; etc. [images]- Boston Globe

Why 2013 was Denise Scott Brown's Year: ...what really stands out...(right up there with "resilience") is equality...In arguing that she has a rightful and equal place alongside husband Robert Venturi, she (along with Harvard GSD's Women in Design organization) woke a sleeping giant—but not for the first time. By Guy Horton- ArchDaily

Architecture in 2014: singing bins, talking pavements and skygardens: From crime-fighting lampposts to...a rise in social housing (finally)...rise of Business Improvement Districts...paving the way for a city shaped solely by commercial interests...many more High Line knock-offs...drop-in architecture and planning shops... By Oliver Wainwright -- Zaha Hadid; John McAslan [images, links]- Guardian (UK)

John McAslan turns his attention from Haiti to Tottenham: 'Everybody deserves an equal chance,' says Scottish designer, who is opening first architect's studio on Tottenham High Road... to train young people and revitalise the area in the wake of the riots... By Robert Booth- Guardian (UK)

Building a better world: can architecture shape behaviour? In 1966, British planner Maurice Broady came up with a new term...architectural determinism...groundlessly asserting that design solutions would change behaviour in a predictable and positive way...The loss of faith in architecture's power has been regrettable...[it] has become a soulless thing. But was determinism dismissed too soon? ...environments do affect us, regardless of whether by design or by accident. By Jan Golembiewski/Medical Architecture & University of Sydney- The Conversation (Australia)

Mass Capital: ...gargantuan De Rotterdam — the latest contribution to the city from its most prodigious architectural offspring, OMA...Impressive is one word...Perplexing is another...a larger-than-life exaggeration of the corporate podium-tower, anxious and engorged, casting a fractured reflection on the water and baring its guts. By Shumi Bose [images]- DesignCurial / Blueprint Magazine (UK)

How Rotterdam lost its architectural soul: ...architectural historian and professor of design Wouter Vanstiphout...on (De) Rotterdam — the city and the building...Instead of being inspired of what made Rotterdam different as was the case with the Kunsthal, De Rotterdam seems just to refer to those things that make Rotterdam the same as everywhere...There is something exhilarating, something beautiful, but also something tragic about this building... -- OMA [images]- DesignCurial / Blueprint Magazine (UK)

Details still fuzzy on Children's Hospital of Philadelphia's research center: ...expects to break ground...and yet we hardly know what they will look like. This is not for lack of renderings and plans...have mainly shown views of the project from 30,000 feet...the absence of information is deeply troubling...promised to enrich the neighborhood with welcoming parks and improved access to the riverfront...But the public spaces depicted in the pictures look anything but inviting. By Inga Saffron -- Pelli Clarke Pelli; Ballinger; Cooper, Robertson & Partners [images]- Philadelphia Inquirer

Tentative signs of progress in Metro's transit network design: A new template...moving toward a much-needed consistency,

if colorlessly so...signs of a new respect for architecture..."kit of parts"...a clear improvement...also overly restrained, even bloodless...more Apple Store neo-Modern than suggestive of contemporary Los Angeles. By Christopher Hawthorne -- Johnson Fain; Martha Welborne; Sussman/Prejza; Melendrez - Los Angeles Times

UTD's arts and technology building is an ingenious lark: ...Edith O'Donnell Arts and Technology Building at the University of Texas at Dallas...ingenious if erratic, mechanical and humane, all mixed up but with a big-hearted intelligence that compensates for its flaws...Call it the cat-in-a-pillowcase school of architecture. By Mark Lamster -- Studios Architecture; VAI Architects, - Dallas Morning News

Another O'Neil Ford home faces demolition: In what is becoming a depressingly familiar refrain, a North Dallas residence...is headed for demolition...the Star house will be the second Ford home demolished...in a matter of months..."It's typical of Ford to sit quietly within the landscape"... By Mark Lamster -- Bodron and Fruit [images]- Dallas Morning News

Cincinnati Art Museum Seeks New Director: Aaron Betsky steps down...will help pick his successor.- The Architect's Newspaper

3rd Edition of the IS ARCH Awards announced -- Ana Bruto da Costa/Joana Gonçalves/João Moreira; Kang ji ho/Shim hun yong/Hwang ki soo/ARCH FRAME; Elena Capodarca/Luca Caroti [images]- ISARCH

Call for entries: New Venue for the Dubai Global Energy Forum: open to students and young graduates; cash prizes; earlybird deadline (save money!): February 16 (submission deadline: April 30)- ArchMedium

One-on-One: Architecture is not exactly global: Interview with Orlando Garcia: The Colombian architect talks about how good architecture and urban design can reach the greatest number of ordinary people. By Vladimir Belogolovsky- ArchNewsNow



OMA: The Speed of Shenzhen: Rem Koolhaas' new Shenzhen Stock Exchange in China...people look down onto a sterile ideal city. By Ulf Meyer [images]

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